

WHITFORD HOCKEY CLUB JUNIOR COACHES HANDBOOK

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1. Introduction

Whitford Hockey Club greatly values its coaches and we are keen to support our coaches in their endeavour to develop and improve their coaching skills and their knowledge and understanding of the game.

This handbook has been put together to help Whitford Hockey Club Junior coaches to coach inline with the expectations of Whitford Hockey Club and ensure our Junior members are being taught the correct skills and attitudes in a fun, friendly environment.

It contains information on the level of skills that should be taught at each age group, information on selecting a team and resources for the coach to plan and manage their sessions.



2. Role of the Junior Coach

Primary Responsibility:

The Junior Coach is responsible for the management of his or her designated junior team in accordance with the rules and values of the club.

Key Roles:

- To ensure the players, parents and other spectators uphold the values of the club and behave in accordance with the code of conduct;
- To coach the juniors in accordance with the requirements of the club and to assist them in achieving their potential as players and team members;
- To ensure players have the skills and competencies necessary for their age group so they can continue to develop in the future;
- To ensure the players display sportsmanship in acknowledging the opposition prior to push back, and cheering the umpires and opposition at the final whistle;
- To attend training and games regularly or alternatives in the event of non-attendance;
- To appoint a captain and vice-captain for the season;
- To appoint volunteers to roles to assist the coach, such as team managers and umpire;
- To acquaint yourself with any medical conditions players may have and ensure appropriate treatment is available if necessary;
- To ensure players do not enter the training track or playing field without shin guards and mouthguard in accordance with club policy, and that the goalkeeper has effective equipment;
- To select teams and consult with coaches in other grades in the same age group regarding selection and player skills;
- To inform parents on the basis of selection of teams and the basis for the ground time;
- To keep the Junior Coordinator regularly informed of matters relating to the team, and to seek guidance where necessary;
- To enter player details and results into HockeyNet in accordance with the instructions;
- To complete the written team sheet and hand a copy to the opposition coach;
- To establish a system for awarding of trophies to the team and to attend the wind-up to hand them out and summarise the season;
- To attend the club whenever possible for team presentations, including announcements of the best player and a brief summary of the results;
- To attend meetings for coaches called by the Junior Coordinator or the Committee;
- To coordinate fundraising activities which require team involvement;
- To promote the club's social activities amongst the players and parents, and coordinate team involvement in activities where necessary;



Helpful Hints:

- Be tough with players and parents early if necessary, especially with regards to shin guards and mouthguard it will help later in the season;
- Be respectful towards the opposition players and supporters and the umpires your leadership and attitude will greatly influence your own team;
- In the event of unruly behaviour by our players or parents, take control early and if unsuccessful, do not hesitate to forfeit the game;
- The teaching of basic roles, basic game plans and game strategies needs to be taught in conjunction with skills at an appropriate age. Coaches of juniors should endeavour to introduce to young players a variety of skill sets. Each player should have the opportunity to play in at least 3 positions through the year to encourage versatility;
- It is important for coaches to plan each session and to be prepared to be flexible with those plans;
- Consider encouraging players and their families to see top men's/ women's games.
 Organise a team outing and include parents;
- Coaches have a duty of care to our junior members during training sessions and games.
 Junior members should not be left alone to wait for their parents at the end of a session.
 If you have to wait with someone ask another parent or adult to wait with you so you are not alone with the child;
- Have fun!



3. A Checklist for Coaches

Create a positive environment

- Learn names quickly.
- Smile, praise and encourage.
- Be patient and supportive.

Set achievable goals

- Keep the player's maturation in mind.
- Make sessions challenging but offer achievable goals.
- Ensure skill development is progressive.

Vary your sessions

- Change format and activities regularly.
- Ensure equal opportunity for all players.
- Avoid elimination games where players sit out.
- Include non-competitive team work.
- Include supervised play with minimal guided instruction.
- Use different teaching/coaching methods (tabloids/cards).

Teach skills

- Plan skills for sessions and introduce easiest ones first.
- Teach one skill, or one part at a time.
- Regularly revise skills from previous weeks.

Demonstrate

- Remember 'a picture paints a thousand words'.
- If you can't demonstrate a skill, choose someone who can.
- Demonstrate what to do, not what not to do.
- Make sure all players can see the demonstration.

Involve all players

- Have ample equipment available.
- Use several small groups rather than one large one and avoid drills where player have to wait in a long queue.
- Aim to have every player practicing the skill each 30 seconds at least.
- Familiarise yourself with the skills of a goal keep and incorporate activities specifically for them.

Provide instant feedback

- Be positive and use lots of praise.
- Be supportive shouting and criticising won't achieve anything.

Use your voice well

Don't shout or talk too much.



4. Concentration Spans of Junior Players

One of the major problems confronting junior coaches is the lack of attention given by the athletes. There could be many reasons for this:

- Boredom through inactivity
- Exercise too difficult to achieve
- Exercise too easily achievable
- Lack of coach personality

These reasons can be directly attributable to the coach and the way the coaching session is being conducted. However coaches must be aware of the concentration spans of young athletes.

- 6 8 year olds 20-30 min sessions, with specific exercises lasting no more than 4-5 min
- 8-9 year olds 30-45 min sessions, with specific exercises lasting no more than 7-8 min
- 9-11 year olds 45-60 min sessions, with specific exercises lasting no more than 8-10 min
- 11+ 60-80 min sessions, with specific exercises lasting no more than 10-15 min

If coaches stray beyond these recommended guidelines, it is possible that they are demanding levels of concentration beyond the capacities of the children and can expect consequent lack of attention.



5. Hockey Australia Player Development Model

The table below has been developed by Hockey Australia and provides a guide to what coaches should focus on and the skills to be taught at various age groups. What is actually taught in an age group will depend on what level the players are at and what grade the team is in. The next section provides further details on what should be covered for each age group.

Stage of Learning	Focus	Skills	Age Guidelines
	Focus on:	Grip – open	
	Fun	Passing/receiving – push,/trap, slap hit	
	Enjoyment	Moving with the ball – front/reverse face	
Doginnor	Motivation	Tackling – block, steal	Dolovi 10
Beginner	Basic Skill Development	Team play – small numbers, concepts	Below 10
	Basic Tactical Awareness		
	Basic rules knowledge		
	Team play		
	Building On:	Additional Skills	10-13
	Skills	Moving with the ball – dodging drags	
Caran Palatina	Game knowledge	Tackling – lunge, poke, from behind, 'wrong' side	
Consolidating	Tactical Awareness	Goal shooting	
	Team play and affiliation	Goal keeping	
	Rules knowledge	Team play – positional play/tactics + concepts	
	Refining:	Application of Skills under pressure	13-17
	Skills	Passing/receiving	
	Game concepts	Moving with the ball	
Established		Tackling	
		Goal shooting	
		Goal keeping	
		Team play	



6. Age Group Outlines

6.1 Minkey

Fun is the focus at this level. Sessions should consist mostly of games which require certain basic skills and not repetitive skills work. Any skills that need to be taught can be made more appealing by, for example, finishing every drill with a goal shot.

The emphasis is on performing skills correctly rather than competition and coaches should offer plenty of encouragement and positive feedback. Simple, easy to remember rules need to be introduced eg, do not lift the stick above the knee/waist, if you kick the ball run away 3 paces before playing the ball again etc.

Players at this age are yet to develop group activity concepts and will be occupied with their own ability to control the ball. Coaches do not need to emphasise passing skills and team play, concentrating more on the correct pushing and trapping skill. As players advance coaches should begin to develop scanning skills (ie looking around whilst maintaining control of the ball).

6.1.1 Skills

Throughout the year, the coach should teach the players the skills identified in the Skills Matrix (refer to Section 7 "Coaching Links and Resources" for details on the skills matrix and the correct techniques) and the skills listed below.

1. Refer to Skills Matrix

2. Reverse stick

Players should be able to reverse their stick over the ball. Left hand at the top rotates the stick with the right hand acting as a guide. Right hand does not rotate position. To start with the ball does not need to move.



6.2 Graduates

Fun should be the focus for players at this age level and games designed to give players opportunities to practise and consolidate skills already taught and to develop new skills should be played at 'training' sessions. Emphasis is on performing skills correctly rather than competition. Skills 'drills' need to be simple and achievable. Plenty of encouragement and positive feedback is essential for the players to have fun and to feel that they are achieving.

At this stage players should be encouraged to look up as much as possible. They should learn to keep the ball on the flat face of the stick as much as possible and a basic understanding of the difference between attack and defence should be introduced.

6.2.1 Skills

Throughout the year, the coach should consolidate skills taught in Minkey, teach the players the skills identified in the Skills Matrix (refer to Section 7 "Coaching Links and Resources" for details on the skills matrix and the correct techniques) and the skills listed below.

1. Skills Matrix

2. Dribble

Scan while dribbling.

Keep the ball close to the stick while scanning.

3. Push

Players should be able to push the ball from left to right with power moving their feet to change direction.

4. Passing

Basic passing with looking and passing sideways.

5. Reverse stick

Continue to practise rolling the reverse stick over the ball. Introduce a big drag-some players will use the back of the stick at this stage. Players move the ball back to the flat stick as quickly as possible.



6.3 J5/6

It is important that *every* player is executing the basic skills with the correct technique at this level. This may require further remediation and consolidation for some players. Some players will be ready to cope with more advanced skills development and their coach needs to accommodate these players as well. Coaches need to be aware that players will develop at their own rate and plan training sessions to meet all needs where possible.

During the course of a season players should:

- Be encouraged to retain team possession of the ball keeping it off the opposition.
- Know basic field positions and largely keep to their position.
- Understand the concept of manning up.
- Keep sticks and the ball down.
- Take free hits quickly.
- Use the width of the ground.
- Work to a set plan to get the ball out of defence.
- Be encouraged to reflect on their game at a very simple level eg. at the end
 of game the coach might ask a few players to tell something that they did
 that was effective, coach might reflect on one aspect of the game that was
 well executed and something that needs to be addressed at the next training
 session. (NB Always finish on a positive.)

6.3.1 Skills

Players should now be able to execute basic skills taught in Minkey and Graduates however there may be some first time players that need to be taught these basic skills. In addition to ensuring that all players can correctly perform the basic skills from earlier age groups, the coach should teach the players the skills identified in the Skills Matrix (refer to Section 7 "Coaching Links and Resources" for details on the skills matrix and the correct techniques) and the skills listed below.

1. Skills Matrix

2. Trapping on the run-front and side

Emphasis should be placed on the basic upright trap as the first option.

Introduce trapping for the next pass-encourage players to decide where they are going before they trap the ball for this move.

3. Hitting on the run (basic)

4. Space

Players should begin to recognise and make use of space on and off the ball.

Goalkeepers

- Stop the ball with kickers-balanced stance on balls of feet, not flat footed;
- Follow ball in an arc;
- Clear the ball with feet or stick to the side;
- Encourage GKs to step out to 'close the angle';
- Encourage GKs to know where their goalposts are at all times.



6.4 J7/8

The emphasis should be on the correct execution of skills with sessions to correct technique as required. Players should have a reasonable knowledge of the rules and should be encouraged to evaluate decisions.

Players should be disciplined about manning up, understand how to create space both on and off the ball and be encouraged to create two on ones in a game. Retaining possession of the ball should be encouraged and players should understand the concept and value of back passing. Players should retain width and depth.

6.4.1 Skills

In addition to ensuring that all players can correctly perform the basic skills from earlier age groups, the coach should teach the players the skills identified in the Skills Matrix (refer to Section 7 "Coaching Links and Resources" for details on the skills matrix and the correct techniques) and the skills listed below.

1. Skills Matrix

2. Vision

Encourage players to look beyond an immediate opponent while dribbling.

3. Deception

Shifting the defence on a free hit.

4. Communication

Use of signals, eye contact.

5. Goal Scoring

Players should understand good goal scoring positions.

Get into a good goal scoring position (down low, near goals but not forward of near post).

As you run into the circle with ball straighten it up towards the goals before shooting.

Look at goals and GK to decide where to shoot.

Shoot quickly e.g. shorter backswing.

Shoot to the far side of the goals so that if the GK saves the shot it will rebound into play.

Follow-up shot (don't stand back and admire the shot).

Protect the ball for the shot.

6. Ball Protection-using the body

Watch opponent and as they draw near enough to tackle, drag the ball back and to the right.

Turn body so that shoulder points at opponent.

Move the left leg forward and to the right so it's between the opponent and the ball.

Dribble the ball to the right. Opponent's stick should strike the leg not the ball.

Lean in on the opponent so as to push past and then cut in behind to eliminate them.

If you can't get behind, keep the opponent on your left as this is the weaker tackling position.

7. Ball Protection-from the side

Dribble in straight line watching opponent's stick. As tackler swings at the ball move stick slightly out and in front of the ball. Hold stick firmly.

Run stick along the ground so that tackler will strike it.

8. Ball Protection-from in front

As above. As tackler swings or jabs at ball move the stick slightly out and <u>in front</u> of the ball. Hold stick firmly between the tackler and the ball.

Once tackler has withdrawn stick normal dribbling can continue.

Goalkeepers

Skills from earlier age groups plus:

- Should begin to slide, defend a basic penalty corner and stop with the hand:
- Continue to develop skills from earlier age groups with emphasis on knowing where you are in relation to the posts;
- Begin to direct defenders.



6.5 J9/10

Focus on the correct execution of skills is still very important at this level and remedial sessions should be included as and when required. Some fitness work may need to be included. Players should be encouraged to interchange positions developing their versatility. Decision-making can be further developed at this stage and players should not only be involved in making decisions but given responsibility to make decisions during games eg corner variations.

Players should understand the concept of both man to man and zone defence and they should be comfortable with the playing of set plays and team tactics. They need to be able to change the way they are playing depending on the way the opposition is playing including varying the tempo of the game. Players should understand the idea of taking risks to score goals. They should understand the value of making use of width and depth and that communication can assist with maintaining focus for a full game.

6.5.1 Skills

In addition to ensuring that all players can correctly perform the basic skills from earlier age groups, the coach should teach the players the skills identified in the Skills Matrix (refer to Section 7 "Coaching Links and Resources" for details on the skills matrix and the correct techniques) and the skills listed below.

1. Skills Matrix

2. Deception

Further development of stick and body feints.

3. Goal scoring

Continue to practise getting into a good position (footwork) with a good stance for taking a quick shot on goal.

4. Penalty Stroke

Best taught by someone who already knows how to do it, it involves flicking the ball at the goals from the penalty spot when a corresponding offence has occurred or at the end of drawn finals (in some grades).



5. Dribbling

Players should be encouraged to gain eye contact while dribbling under pressure.

Goalkeepers

Skills from earlier age groups plus:

• Should be able to read the play and are encouraged to take responsibility for directing their defenders.

6.6 J11/12

Players should have a good understanding of team tactics and set plays. Fitness is an important aspect at this level and players should maintain a fitness routine. The correct execution of skills needs to be monitored and corrected as and when required. Players should be able to balance their school, work, social and sporting commitments and time should be given to setting achievable individual and group goals.

Emphasis should be placed on correct decision-making during games. Players should play to a team strategy, control the tempo of a game, be able to decide when to take the risk to attempt to score a goal and be competent in both man to man and zone defence.

6.6.1 **Skills**

In addition to ensuring that all players can correctly perform the basic skills from earlier age groups, the coach should teach the players the skills identified in the Skills Matrix (refer to Section 7 "Coaching Links and Resources" for details on the skills matrix and the correct techniques) and the skills listed below.

1. Skills Matrix

2. Dribbling

Players should be able to pass to a signal (eye, stick, body) while dribbling under pressure.

3. Hitting off either foot on the run

4. Advanced Scanning

Scanning in all directions while dribbling.

5. Deception

Continue to develop stick and body feints.

6. Receiving When Marked

Passing to a marked player and receiving when marked.

7. Reading the Play



Recognising and assessing threats and opportunities.

8. Frees

Players should be able to avoid giving away frees.

9. Overheads

Perform a stationary-to-stationary overhead. Advanced players can move to doing overheads on the move and overheads to a leading teammate.



7. Coaching Links and Resources

Whitford Hockey Club has compiled a number of resources and links to assist our coaches. These include:

- A skills matrix identifying core hockey skills and at what age group players should be able to perform them;
- Documents and videos on how to correctly perform these core hockey skills and drills that can be used to teach them;
- The importance and benefit of a dynamic warm-up rather than a static warm-up and how to implement one;
- Specific goal keeping skills and drills;
- Video library showing interpretations of the FIH rules of hockey;
- Fitness and conditioning resources.

These resources are either links to other websites, downloadable PDFs or online videos. Because other websites often change their links or location of resources, we have created a page on our website that contains the most upto date links to all of these resources for your use. To get access to these resources please visit:

http://www.whitfordhockey.asn.au/junior-coaches-handbook



8. Session Planning, Drills and Activities

To assist our junior coaches with planning of their training sessions and coming up with drills and activates to use Whitford Hockey Club has purchased a subscription to: http://www.sportplan.net/drills/Hockey/index.jsp

Sportplan.net is a fantastic online resource that allows you to search 100s of Hockey animated drills and video techniques, easily collect drills you like on your clipboard and start planning your training session.

You can also sketch drills and tactics using the online Chalkboard or animate your drills and tactics using the Sportplan Animator.

In addition there is a forum where you can get your questions answered by Field Hockey Experts and coaches from around world.

To maintain the security of our account, the password will be changed from time to time. In order to access the club subscription please send an email to sportplan@whitfordhockey.asn.au and we will send you the current login details.



9. Possible Skill Selection Criteria

Specific skill-based selection criteria will vary according to age group. Nevertheless, there are skill categories and attributes that are common to all including *passing skills, receiving the ball skills, elimination skills, tackling, shooting, game awareness and temperament*. Coaches should understand and develop a list of skills under each of these categories which is appropriate for the age group they are coaching. This will help in the selection process and also identify strengths and weaknesses of individual players. This in turn can be used to plan training and game strategies with the aim of improving players and game performance.

Below is an example of selection criteria used for the U14 Victorian State team (boys and Girls) in 2003.

- 1. **Passing Skills:** Does the player possess the passing skills necessary for the position? Can they hit or push off either foot; can they play a reverse stick pass if necessary; are their passes hard, flat and accurate; do they select the appropriate pass given the context?
- 2. **Receiving the ball:** Is the player able to receive the ball using the appropriate technique for the context, or do they rely heavily on one type of trap; do they receive comfortably on the reverse side, do they eliminate their opponent when they receive the ball?
- 3. *Elimination skills*: Are they comfortable when in control of the ball and pressured: are they able to eliminate on both sides of the opponent; do they appear to understand what the tackler is doing and react accordingly?
- 4. **Tackling:** Do they appear to understand how to manipulate space of the opponent by channelling; do they have a range of tackles; can they tackle on the reverse; do they use good footwork; can they get the ball without stick obstructing?
- 5. **Shooting:** Do they get free in the circle; do they get shots away under pressure; do they have an array of shots; are they aware of what the goalkeeper is doing?
- 6. **Involvement in the game/awareness:** does the player understand what is happening on the field; do they move accordingly; do they recognise 2v1, 3v2 etc and are able to exploit them; in defence do they understand how to play situations where there are more attackers than defenders; do they understand cover; do they work hard when the opposition has the ball?
- 7. **Temperament:** Do they appear to get flustered in the heat of the game; were they involved totally; do they take responsibility for what is happening around them; do they communicate clearly and freely to team mates?



10. Player Skills Inventory

Players Name:							
	Players Name: Rating PASSING (flat, hard and accurate to receiver)						
1							
2	Hit – moving; hit Right to Left						
3	Push – Stationary						
4	Push – moving; hit Right to Left						
5	Push – moving; hit Left to Right						
6	Recognise to pass to Stick or to Space						
SHOOTING							
7	Normal Grip Hitting						
8	Short Grip Hitting						
	TRAPPING (upright)						
9	Fore Stick trapping – when received from Front and Left side						
10	Fore Stick trapping – when received from Right side						
11	Fore stick trapping – when received from behind						
12	Reverse Stick trapping						
13	Moving - Fore Stick trapping						
14	Moving - Reverse Stick trapping						
	TACKLING						
15	Channel – able to direct opponent						
16	Mirror – boxers stance and able to pivot off back foot						
17	Poke tackle						
18	Flat tackle both sides						
	BALL CONTROL AND ELIMINATION	1					
19	Dribbling ball with stick in constant contact with ball						
20	Protect ball by changing line						
21	Drag and eliminate Left to Right (swerve and drag)						
22	Drag and eliminate Right to Left (show and go)						
23	Cut in behind after eliminating						
24	Able to move with ball to create 2v1 from a 2v2 situation						
PERSONAL							
25	Involvement in game at all times						
26	Temperament – in control and positive to team-mates						
27 Positional skills in multiple positions							
Comments:							



11. Match Checklist for Coaches

What follows is a checklist that coaches can use to manage their team on game day. Follow through the notes below and make notes on what you find on the day.

First Half

- 1. Look at Opposition
 - a. Outlets. Preferred methods and side. Key players
 - b. Outlet control. Press, drop away, leave certain players open, man to man marking.
 - c. Are they marking man to man any of our players?
 - d. What is their preferred attacking style? Fast/slow build up, which side
 - e. Penalty Corners Defence: What positions do they run to? Does the goalie run/stay.
 - f. Penalty Corner Attack: Positions and variations.

2. Look at Our Team

- a. How are our outlet controls working? Is any player not doing what is required? Are we following our match plan? Is it working?
- b. How are individual players performing?
- c. Defence and attack as a unit?
- d. What changes need to be made? 20 minutes to go each half. Do we go for broke if behind?
- e. Specific Tactics. Kill the game, attack right or left side, backs to run the ball out or transfer, interchange of forwards.
- 3. What can be changed?
 - a. Usually certain things stand out.
- 4. Put together half time report (see hints below).

Second Half

- 1. Utilize alternative tactics
- 2. Make substitutions
- 3. Revisit match checklist as above

Hints for Effective Pre-game and half time talks

- 1. Deliver only a few messages
- 2. Convey a sense of control, composure, and conviction rather than anxiety
- 3. Be positive and use praise to reinforce appropriate behaviour in athletes and the team
- 4. Speak about an opposition player or team



- 5. Concentrate more on communications related to tactics and strategies
- 6. Prepare the address with the following structure
 - a. Begin with a commentary on the previous performance during the game (especially on what the opposition has been doing)
 - b. Provide solutions (tactics and strategies) that are informed by an analysis of the opposition's performance
 - c. Finish with a short motivational analysis



12. Accreditation

Hockey Australia runs an accreditation program that operates within the Australian Sports Commission's (ASC) National Officiating Accreditation Scheme (NOAS) and National Coaching Accreditation Scheme (NCAS).

The five coaching accreditation levels are:

- Community
- Beginner
- Development
- Advanced
- High Performance

Community

The Community Coach training program is designed to train coaches in the basic concepts of coaching including group management and organisation; conducting modified games and activities; safety and enjoyment. It is an enjoyable and straightforward training program involving an online learning session, an applied learning quiz and a practical evaluation.

The Community Coach program is free and **ALL** Whitford Hockey Club coaches are encouraged to undertake this course. It can be done in your own time and most of it is online.

Beginner

The Beginner Coach Training Program is designed to train coaches in the fundamental concepts of coaching including group management and organisation, developing effective training sessions, performing the role of match day coach and ensuring the safety and enjoyment of players.

The Beginner Coach program is also mostly online and it costs \$50. Whitford Hockey Club will reimburse you for this cost. Contact the Junior Coordinator at juniorcoordinator@whitfordhockey.asn.au to arrange a reimbursement.

<u>Access</u>

More information and access to the course is available through the Hockey Australia website or by going to the following link: http://www.hockey.org.au/index.php?id=135

After School Care Coaching

The government runs an after school hockey coaching program where qualified coaches (i.e. have completed the Community Coaching Accreditation) can get paid \$20 - \$25 per 30-45 min session. For more information and to register in this program please contact the Junior Coordinator at juniorcoordinator@whitfordhockey.asn.au.



13. Other Information

On the club website we have a number of other documents you may require through out the season. An outline of the documents available is listed below. To view, download or print these documents please visit:

http://www.whitfordhockey.asn.au/junior-coaches-handbook

- Guide to Trophies and Awards
- Voting Slips Template
- Contact List
- Calendar
- Spectators Code of Conduct
- Accident Claim Procedure